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ABSTRACT

As part of an effort by William Rainey Harper College (WRHC) to determine the educational needs of minorities on campus and in the community, a study was conducted of the academic performance of different ethnic groups. Using student transcripts, the longitudinal performances of 100-student samples each of Blacks, Asians, and Hispanics were analyzed for the period between 1976 and 1984, and compared with results from similar studies done on samples of the entire, 90% White, student body. Study findings included the following: (1) overall, Whites earned a higher grade point average (GPA) at WRHC, averaging 2.53, compared to 2.44 for Asians, 2.14 for Hispanics, and 1.98 for Blacks; (2) females earned a higher average GPA than males in all ethnic groups except for Hispanics; (3) 90% of the Asian students, 84% of the Hispanics, 70% of the Blacks, and 60% of the Whites returned to WRHC after their first year of enrollment; (4) in terms of semesters attended, Asians averaged 6.7 semesters, Hispanics 6.3 semesters, Blacks 4.9 semesters, and Whites 4.0 semesters; (5) 22% of the Black students transferred credits from other colleges into WRHC, compared to only 9% of the other students; (6) minorities were more likely to take continuing education courses along with their degree credit courses than were Whites; (7) 44% of the Hispanic students and 36% of the Asian students enrolled in adult educational development or English-as-a-Second-Language courses, compared to only 7% to 9% of the Black and White students; and (8) there were only small age differences across the ethnic groups. (ALB)

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Office of Planning and Research

William Rainey Harper College

COMPARISON OF PERFORMANCE AND EDUCATIONAL PATTERNS OF FOUR ETHNIC GROUPS OF STUDENTS AT HARPER COLLEGE

Volume XVII, No. 6
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Dr. John Lucas, Director
Office of Planning and Research

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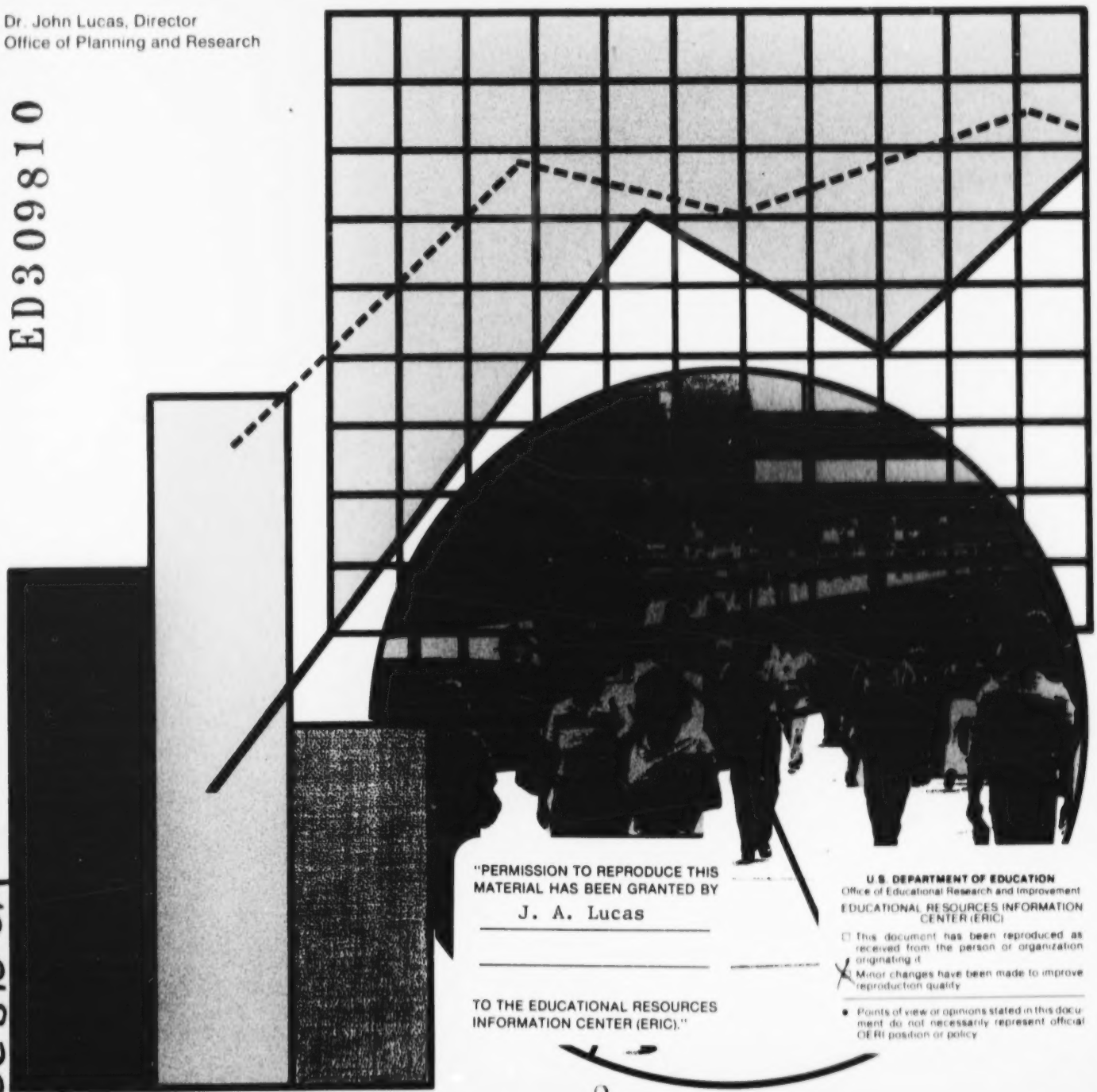

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ABSTRACT

THE PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY WAS TO EXAMINE THE PERFORMANCE OF DIFFERENT ETHNIC GROUPS AS PART OF AN INSTITUTIONAL EFFORT TO DETERMINE WHAT HARPER MUST DO TO ADDRESS THE EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF MINORITIES ON CAMPUS AND IN THE COMMUNITY. USING TRANSCRIPTS, LONGITUDINAL PERFORMANCE OVER A PERIOD OF TIME WAS ANALYZED ON SAMPLES OF FOUR ETHNIC GROUPS (WHITES, BLACKS, ASIANS, AND HISPANICS) WHO FIRST ENROLLED AT HARPER BETWEEN 1976 AND 1984. FULL-TIME AND PART-TIME STUDENTS WERE EXAMINED SEPARATELY IN ORDER TO CONTROL FOR THE EFFECTS OF THAT FACTOR.

RESULTS OF THE STUDY SHOWED THAT WHITES EARN A HIGHER GPA AT HARPER THAN THE VARIOUS ETHNIC GROUPS; HOWEVER, THESE MINORITIES PERSIST LONGER AT HARPER. THERE ARE ALSO DIFFERENT PATTERNS OF STUDY ACROSS THE VARIOUS MINORITY GROUPS. BLACKS ARE MORE LIKELY TO TRANSFER CREDITS INTO HARPER WHILE HISPANICS AND ASIANS ARE MORE LIKELY TO ENROLL IN ADULT EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE COLLEGE CREDIT COURSES. MINORITIES IN GENERAL ARE MORE LIKELY TO ENROLL IN CONTINUING EDUCATION COURSES. THERE ARE ONLY SMALL AGE DIFFERENCES ACROSS THE VARIOUS ETHNIC GROUPS.

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PURPOSE

The purpose of this study was to examine the performance of different ethnic groups as part of an institutional effort to determine what Harper must do to address the educational needs of minorities on campus and in the community.

METHODOLOGY

Samples of 100 transcripts were gathered on each of 3 groups of students (Hispanics, Blacks, and Asians), who first enrolled at Harper between 1976 and 1984. Their longitudinal performance over time was compared to similar longitudinal studies done on samples of the entire student body (90% White) during this same time period. Because whether a student starts as a part-time or full-time student drastically effects longitudinal measures of performance. Analyses were conducted separately on full-time and part-time students.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Overall Whites earn a higher GPA at Harper. They average 2.53 vs. 2.44 for Asians, 2.14 for Hispanics, and 1.98 for Blacks. In general, females earn a higher GPA than males except for Hispanics in which case they earn equal GPA's.

Despite the fact Whites earn a higher GPA, minorities seem to persist longer. For example, in terms of the percentage of students returning after their first year at Harper, only 60 percent of the Whites return while 70 percent of the blacks, 84 percent of the hispanics, and 90 percent of the asians return some time after their first year at Harper. In terms of semesters attended, whites average only 4.0 semesters while Blacks average 4.9, Hispanics 6.3 and Asians 6.7 semesters. Considering completion rates, 21 percent of the Asians complete a degree or certificate while 19 percent of the Hispanics, 15-1/2 percent of the Whites and 15 percent of the Blacks achieve a degree or certificate. The only measure of persistence which gives mixed signals is the average number of credit hours earned. Asians on the average earned 26 credit hours while Whites earned 24 hours, Hispanics 23 credit hours and Blacks 16 credit hours.

There were other differences also in the enrollment history of the four groups of students. Some 22 percent of the Blacks transfer credits from other colleges into Harper while only 9 percent of the other students transfer credits into Harper. Minorities are much more likely to take continuing education courses (CE) along with their degree credit courses than are Whites. For example, 44 percent of the Asian students take continuing education while 41 percent of the Blacks and 34 percent of the Hispanics take continuing education while only 24 percent of the White students take continuing education.

There were even differences among the groups in the sequence in which CE courses were taken. For example, Blacks were much more likely to take CE courses first before enrolling in degree credit courses. Hispanics and Asians are much more likely to take English as a Second Language (ESL) courses or Adult Educational Development (AED) courses. A total of 44 percent of the Hispanic and 36 percent of the Asian students take ESL or AED courses compared to only 7-9 percent of the Blacks and Whites taking these courses.

The ages of students when they started at Harper were fairly similar across ethnic groups; however, there were some differences. Blacks starting as full-time students were older (22-1/2) than other students starting as full-time students (19). Whites starting as part-time students are a little older (32) than other students (30 starting part time.

MAJOR CONCLUSIONS

Whites earn a higher GPA at Harper than the various ethnic groups; however, these minorities persist longer at Harper. There are also different patterns of study across the various minority groups. Blacks are more likely to transfer credits into Harper while Hispanics and Asians are more likely to enroll in Adult Educational Development and English as a Second Language college credit courses. Minorities in general are more likely to enroll in continuing education courses. There are only small age differences across the various ethnic groups.

ANALYSIS OF FULL-TIME STUDENTS BY ETHNIC STATUS

LONGITUDINAL DATA FOR STUDENTS ENTERING 1976-1984 AS FULL-TIME STUDENTS

	All Student	Hispanic	Black	Asian
Sample Size	1,800	19	40	21
Mean GPA	2.51	2.08	1.72	2.40
PCT who did not establish a GPA	0	5.3	2.5	0
Mean cum hrs. attempted	46.9	39.2	32.2	55.7
Mean cum hrs. earned	45.0	33.7	25.4	47.6
PCT registered following term	91.2	68.4	72.5	85.7
PCT registered one year later	65.6	47.4	50.0	66.7
PCT registered some time later	13.1	47.3	20.0	28.6
PCT never returned after first year	21.3	5.3	30.0	4.7
Average number of semesters attended	4.9	6.5	4.7	6.9
PCT registered for 1 semester	5.1	5.3	47.5	0
PCT registered for 2 semesters	15.0	5.2	15.0	0
PCT registered for 3 semesters	11.1	15.8	10.0	9.5
PCT registered for 4 semesters	14.8	15.8	5.0	19.1
PCT registered for 5 semesters	16.7	10.5	2.5	9.5
PCT registered for 6 semesters	13.6	5.3	0	9.5
PCT registered for 7 or more semesters	23.7	42.1	20.0	52.4
Hours and Awards Accumulated				
Under 24 hours/no award	19.9	47.4	47.5	23.8
24-35 hours/no award	19.2	5.3	15.0	4.7
36-47 hours/no award	8.9	15.8	10.0	19.1
48 hours or more/no award	17.5	5.2	5.0	14.3
48 hours or more/with degree	31.7	21.0	2.5	38.1
Less than 48 hours/with degree	1.1	0	0	0
Certificate only	1.7	5.3	20.0	0
PCT transferred credits into Harper	8.3	5.3	10.0	19.0
Continuing Education Status				
PCT total who took CE courses	15.9	31.6	30.0	23.8
PCT took CE courses first	.7	5.3	20.0	0
PCT took CE courses simultaneously	1.3	0	2.5	0
PCT took CE courses later	13.9	26.3	7.5	23.8

ANALYSIS OF FULL-TIME STUDENTS BY ETHNIC STATUS (continued)

LONGITUDINAL DATA FOR STUDENTS ENTERING 1976-1984 AS FULL-TIME STUDENTS

	All Students	Hispanic	Black	Asian
College Credit Type of Student				
ESL or AED Student Only	--	0	2.5	0
Some AED or ESL then degree credit	--	5.3	7.5	0
Degree credit only	100.0	94.7	90.0	100.0
Student Gender				
Male	52.7	57.9	57.5	61.9
Female	47.3	42.1	42.5	38.1
PCT males with degree or certificate	26.1	27.3	8.7	30.8
PCT females with degree or certificate	33.9	25.0	41.2	50.0
Mean GPA males	2.38	2.20	1.44	2.47
Mean GPA females	2.62	1.92	2.10	2.29
AGE				
Under 21	93.1	84.2	57.5	90.5
21-34	6.1	15.8	42.5	9.5
35 and older	.8	0	0	0
Average age	19.1	19.1	22.5	19.5

ANALYSIS OF PART-TIME STUDENTS BY ETHNIC STATUS

LONGITUDINAL DATA FOR STUDENTS ENTERING 1976-1984 AS PART-TIME STUDENTS

	All Students	Hispanic	Black	Asian
Sample Size	1,800	81	60	83
Mean GPA	2.54	2.16	2.04	2.45
PCT who did not establish a GPA	9	33.3	6.7	16.9
Mean cum hrs. attempted	20.1	23.1	16.5	22.4
Mean cum hrs. earned	18.4	20.6	13.8	20.5
PCT registered following term	60.0	49.4	56.7	49.4
PCT registered one year later	39.3	34.6	31.7	32.5
PCT registered some time later	16.3	46.9	38.3	56.7
PCT never returned after first year	44.4	18.5	30.0	10.8
Average number of semesters attended	3.8	6.2	4.9	6.6
PCT registered for 1 semester	26.5	11.1	13.3	4.8
PCT registered for 2 semesters	21.8	12.3	18.4	12.1
PCT registered for 3 semesters	12.2	13.6	10.0	10.9
PCT registered for 4 semesters	9.9	8.7	16.7	8.4
PCT registered for 5 semesters	6.4	8.6	8.3	9.6
PCT registered for 6 semesters	6.6	6.2	5.0	12.0
PCT registered for 7 or more semesters	16.6	39.5	28.3	42.2
Hours and Awards Accumulated				
Under 12 hours/no award	54.7	53.1	60.0	45.8
12-23 Hours/no award	17.8	19.7	16.7	22.9
24-35 hours/no award	7.1	3.7	6.7	4.8
36-47 hours/no award	4.5	3.7	0	3.6
48 hours or more/no award	5.1	2.5	3.3	6.0
48 hours or more/with degree	6.7	11.1	3.3	6.1
Less than 48 hours/with degree	1.8	0	3.3	2.4
Certificate only	2.3	6.2	6.7	8.4
PCT transferred credits into Harper	9.0	9.9	25.0	7.2
Continuing Education Status				
PCT total who took CE courses	25.8	34.6	43.3	49.4
PCT took CE courses first	3.4	7.4	21.6	14.5
PCT took CE courses simultaneously	4.2	0	0	4.8
PCT took CE courses later	18.2	27.2	21.7	30.1

ANALYSIS OF PART-TIME STUDENTS BY ETHNIC STATUS (continued)

LONGITUDINAL DATA FOR STUDENTS ENTERING 1976-1984 AS PART-TIME STUDENTS

College Credit Type of Student	All Students	Hispanic	Black	Asian
ESL or AED Student only	(11.8	30.9	1.7	15.7
Some AED/ESL then degree credit	(	22.2	6.6	26.5
Degree credit only	88.2	46.9	91.7	57.8
Student Gender				
Male	40.4	45.7	43.3	39.8
Female	59.6	54.3	56.7	60.2
PCT males with degree or certificate	7.1	16.2	15.4	15.2
PCT females with degree or certificate	11.4	18.2	11.8	18.0
Mean GPA males	2.33	2.11	1.95	2.02
Mean GPA females	2.61	2.20	2.12	2.80
AGE				
Under 21	21.4	19.0	16.7	15.9
21-34	45.3	59.5	61.6	53.6
35 and older	33.3	21.5	21.7	30.5
Average age	32.3	28.0	30.0	31.2

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